PREAMBLE

The Lord Jesus has provided continually for the care of the Church through the apostolic succession of bishops. “By divine institution bishops have succeeded to the place of the apostles as shepherds of the Church” (LG 20), charged “to attend to the whole flock in which the Holy Spirit placed them to shepherd the Church of God” (Ibid).

In order to provide more fully for the welfare of the portion of the people of God entrusted to their care (see c. 495.par.1), bishops call to themselves as “necessary helpers and counselors” (PO 7), priests who, “although dependent on the bishop in the exercise of their power […] are nonetheless united with the bishops in sacerdotal dignity” (LG 28). Those called to this service of the People of God, exclusively in union with the bishop, constitute a hierarchical communion (PO 7) and form “one presbyterate and one family, whose father is the bishop” (CD 28; see also LG 28 and PO 8).

This hierarchical communion “manifests itself institutionally in the presbyteral council, insofar as it is ‘a group of priests which, representing the presbyterium, […] assists the Bishop in the governance of the diocese according to the norm of law to promote as much as possible the pastoral good of the portion of the people of God entrusted to him.’
In this way, in addition to facilitating the necessary dialogue between the Bishop and the presbyterate, the council serves to foster fraternity between different groups of clergy in the diocese. The council is firmly rooted in the concrete reality of the presbyterate and in the particular ecclesial mission that falls to priests as principal co-workers of the order of Bishops. The council is therefore ‘diocesan’ by nature” (*Apostolorum Successores* 182).

The Presbyteral Council should be reflective of the composition of the whole presbyterate of the diocese. The representative character of the Council is effected by ensuring the following are represented within its composition:

a) the different ministries  
b) the regions or pastoral zones of the diocese  
c) the different age groups or generations of priests (See c. 499)

**ARTICLE I: NAME**

The name of this body is “The Presbyteral Council of the Archdiocese of Denver.” In its statutes, it is hereafter referred to as the “Council”.

**ARTICLE II: PURPOSE**

The purposes of the Council are the following:

1: The Council is to function as an advisory body for the bishop, who is thus informed by the wisdom, experience, and prudent judgment of the presbyterate.

2: The Council aids the Archbishop (c. 495) in the governance of the Archdiocese according to the norms of law so that the pastoral welfare of that portion of the People of God committed to the Archbishop with the cooperation of the presbyterate may be carried forward as effectively as possible.

3: The Council is a consultative, non-deliberative body. The Archbishop is to consult with the Council on all affairs of great importance in the life of a diocese (c. 500 §2). Also, he must consult with it regarding the following matters:

   a. the convention of a diocesan synod. (c. 461)

   b. the establishment, suppression, or notable alteration of a parish. (c. 515)
c. the establishment of prescripts regarding offerings of the faithful for parochial services, their allocation, and remuneration of clerics for the same. (c. 531)

d. the establishment of parish pastoral councils. (c. 536)

e. the decision to build a church or relegate one to profane use. (cc. 1215, 1222)

f. the taxation of juridic persons. (c. 1263)

g. the establishment of a group of pastors to serve as consultants in the removal or involuntary transfer of a pastor. (cc. 1742-1750)

4: Finally, the Council provides a forum for discussion of other pastoral concerns proposed by the Archbishop or admitted by him for consideration.

ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

1: Membership consists of any coadjutor bishop, any auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Denver, one priest elected from each vicariate forane (deanery) (c. 497 §1), those priests who serve ex-officio (c. 497 §2), and those priests appointed by the Archbishop (c. 497 §3).

1.1: Among the members, at least one must be a religious priest of the presbyterate, and one other must be from the junior clergy of the diocesan priests, having been ordained five years or less. These positions will be filled by appointment of the Archbishop if they are not filled by election.

1.2: Ex-officio members are the vicar(s) general, episcopal vicars, and the judicial vicar.

1.3: When a member of the Council vacates his position, the vacancy is to be filled within three months by processes described in these statutes.

1.4: The number of elected priests should be as close as possible to half of the composition of the Council.
2: The election of the members:

2.1: All secular priests incardinated in the diocese and all priests who are living in the diocese and exercise any office for the benefit of the diocese whether they be secular priests not incardinated in the diocese or priest members of religious institution or of societies of apostolic life, possess active and passive voice in their deanery of their domicile (c. 498 §1). The Vicar for Clergy shall maintain a list of such priests for each deanery. Extern priests who have only domicile or quasi-domicile in the diocese without a ministerial assignment (c.498 §2) will be afforded active and passive voice according to the determination of the Vicar for Clergy.

2.2: Considering canons 119 and 164, which allow statues to specify the manner of election, the election of members takes place under the direction of the Vicar for Clergy, who will mail to those in each deanery with active voice ballots containing the names of those with passive voice in each deanery. The Vicar for Clergy specifies when the ballots must be returned and any other requirements for the election.

2.3: Elections should take place during the month of July. The priest elected by a majority of those voting will be submitted by August 1st to the Archbishop and the Council. The vacancy of any elected member shall be filled by a special election for the completion of the term. This election must take place within three months.

2.4: Disputed cases concerning active or passive voice are to be discussed by the Executive Committee and submitted to the Archbishop for decision.

3: An elected member is elected for a three-year term. A member appointed by the Archbishop according to canon 497 §3, also serves a three-year term, which may be extended at the discretion of the Archbishop. The membership of an ex officio member is coterminous with his office.

4: An elected priest can serve no more than two (2) terms consecutively. Terms of office run from August 1 to July 31 of the appropriate years.

5: If the domicile of an elected member changes to another deanery, his membership ceases, and a new election for that deanery must be held within three months.
ARTICLE IV: CESSATION OF THE COUNCIL

1: The Council ceases at the time of and during the vacancy of the See until the newly appointed Archbishop establishes it (c. 501, § 2).

2: The Council is dissolved at the Archbishop’s discretion according to the norm of c. 501 §3, when it no longer fulfills the functions committed to it or when it is gravely abusing its function.

ARTICLE V: PRESIDENT AND OFFICERS

1: The president of the Council is the Archbishop of Denver. The President alone has the right to call meetings of the Council, to preside over its meetings, to determine its agenda, to accept or reject the results of the Council’s deliberations, and publicize the same (c. 500).

2: The officers of the Council are the chairman, and vice-chairman

2.1: The chairman presides only by specific delegation from the President at the meetings of the Council according to the parameters of his delegation.

2.2: The vice-chairman assists the chair and serves in his place when the chairman is absent. He is responsible for keeping the minutes of every meeting and performing other administrative functions at the request of the chairman.

2.3: When the vice-chairman is legitimately serving in the place of the chairman, the vice-chairman may delegate another member of the Council to assist him.

2.4: All members of the Council are *ipso facto* eligible to hold offices.

2.5: All officers are elected by and from among the members of the Council with a majority vote of those present and with the approval of the President.

2.6: Elections of officers takes place at the first meeting following the initial establishment of the Council and, thereafter, every two years following the initial election of officers.

2.7: The term of office of the Council officers is two years.

2.8: Following the vacancy of a Council office, a special election is to be held at the next meeting.
ARTICLE VI: MEETINGS

1: The Council is to meet when convoked by the President, who shall issue a regular schedule of meetings.

2: In accord with the Particular Law for the United States, the Council must meet at least four times per year (NCCB, Complementary Legislation for Canon 496).

3: The calendar of meetings scheduled by the President for the whole year must be communicated by mail to each member of the Council before the first meeting in a given year. In this way, communication of the calendar functions as legitimate convocation of all members. Special meetings may be convoked at the discretion of the President.

4: Only those legitimately convoked and present at the time and place specified in the notice of convocation are permitted to participate in that meeting’s activity. At the discretion of the President, those present by teleconference, videoconference, or similar means of electronic communication may participate, as well.

5: Due to the collaborative nature of the Council, members of the Council, who were legitimately convoked, forfeit the right to participate in those meeting activities for which they were not present.

6: Whether through voting or counsel, each member who is present according to the above prescripts has the right to offer an opinion on each matter discussed.

7: While the President must convocate all members and seek the opinion of those present for each matter discussed at a meeting, a formal vote is not required. Votes may be initiated by the one presiding at the meeting.

ARTICLE VII: COMMITTEES

1: The Council has one standing committee, the Executive Committee.

1.1: The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers of the Council. As instructed by the Archbishop, the committee shall prepare the agenda for the meetings of the Council and shall coordinate the work of any other committees. The Executive Committee shall not have the power to act in the name of the Council.
1.2: In order to promote unity and collaboration within the Council, the creation of additional standing committees is prohibited. The President alone, however, may create special committees as needed, determining their scope and time of operation.

1.3: Any member of the presbyterate is free to propose to the President the creation of a special committee.

ARTICLE VIII: AMENDMENTS

1: The Archbishop of Denver alone may alter these statutes by notifying the members in writing of any changes. Any changes will take effect immediately, unless otherwise stated.

2: To receive the formal recommendation of the Council, amendments must receive at least a majority of two-thirds of the members present and voting.

ARTICLE IX: APPROBATION

These statutes are hereby approved by the Archbishop of Denver and are to be interpreted in accord with the 1983 Code of Canon Law and the customs, rules, regulations and statutes of the Catholic Church and the Archdiocese of Denver. They may be formally interpreted and amended only by the Archbishop of Denver.

On the 18th day of October 2013
Denver, Colorado

Most Reverend Samuel J. Aquila, S.T.L.
Archbishop of Denver

Mr. David Uebbing
Chancellor